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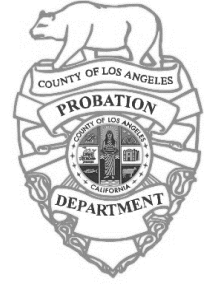
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KAREN L. FLETCHER
Interim Chief Probation Officer

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES PROBATION DEPARTMENT

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March 22, 2023

TO: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Karen L. Fletcher *Karen Fletcher*
Interim Chief Probation Officer

SUBJECT: **ADDRESSING EMERGENT ILLICIT SUBSTANCES AND CONTRABAND
ENTERING THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY JUVENILE HALLS
(ITEM NO. 56-A, DIRECTIVES 1, 5 AND 6, AGENDA OF MARCH 7, 2023)**

On March 7, 2023, on motion of Supervisors Solis and Hahn, as amended by Supervisor Horvath, the Board of Supervisors (Board) took various actions pertaining to illicit substances and contraband entering the juvenile halls, including those related to Directives 1, 5 and 6, as follows:

1. Instructed the Chief Probation Officer to report back to the Board in writing in 14 days on how the Department is immediately addressing the flow of illicit substances and contraband that are entering the County's juvenile halls including at a minimum, the following:
 - a. Using K-9 search teams to conduct searches of housing units only, for illicit substances and contraband;
 - b. Supplementing existing security, stationed at the entrances and perimeters, with law enforcement, including the use of K-9 search teams;
 - c. Reporting to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) and Probation Oversight Commission (POC) on:

- i. Any complaints of misuse or misconduct on the use of K-9 search teams; and
 - ii. Documentation on the deployment of K-9 search teams with date, time, units, names of staff involved in search, names of staff assigned to the unit, what was discovered, measures taken, and other relevant information; and
 - d. Working with the Department of Public Health (DPH) to make Narcan readily and easily accessible to youth and educating and training youth on how to use Narcan.
5. Instructed the Chief Probation Officer to report back to the Board in 14 days about their immediate effort with Probation staff with supervisory duties to initiate disciplinary procedures against any employee who has knowledge of another employee enabling the spread of illicit substances, but does not report those activities to their supervisor; and
6. Directed the Chief Probation Officer to report back to the Board in 14 days about their work to immediately begin the discipline process, including termination for any employee who, in violation of County policy, is found to be enabling the spread of illicit substances in any Juvenile Probation facility.

The following provides a response to the above Directives.

I. DEPARTMENT'S IMMEDIATE ADDRESSING OF FLOW OF ILLICIT SUBSTANCES AND CONTRABAND ENTERING COUNTY'S JUVENILE HALLS (DIRECTIVE 1)

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Given the serious nature and prevalence of illicit substances and contraband flowing into the juvenile facilities, as reported to the POC on February 22, 2023, the Probation Department continues to proactively make every effort to take preventative measures to mitigate the risk of contraband at the juvenile facilities including the following:

Detention Services Bureau (Juvenile Halls)

Central Juvenile Hall

- Requests to local law enforcement have been made to increase mobile surveillance to increase presence in areas where contraband is believed to be thrown from.
- A request to increase vehicle patrols by contracted security.

- Searches are being conducted in adherence to Detention Services Bureau Manual section 700 and Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), Title 15 Regulations 1360.
- Field searches are conducted before and after a unit is moved throughout the facility (to/from school and outdoor recreation).
- A request for pricing/proposal was submitted for golf course-type fencing/netting to be placed high along the perimeter wall.
- Preliminary research has been conducted by facility staff about acquiring Drone Security Technology to eliminate the risk of drone drops.
- Metal Detector wands were issued to each unit to aid in unit searches.
- Everyone entering the facility is required to go through a metal detector and all belongings (bags, purses, etc.) are scanned by an x-ray machine.
- The addition of Vapor Tracer machines at the entrance of the facility will be utilized to detect illegal substances.
- The assistance of the Special Enforcement Operations (SEO) and the Canine Units are requested, when needed.
- As of 3/20/2023, 236 staff have completed Narcan training. Narcan is available in every unit.

Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall

- Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD)/Allied Universal Contract Security Guard post orders were updated and implemented on November 14, 2022. The list of prohibited items was updated and provided to all staff and Partner Agency personnel.
- Searches are being conducted in adherence to Detention Services Bureau Manual section 700 and BSCC, Title 15 Regulations 1360.
- Directors are conducting weekly Director/Supervisor meetings where contraband and solutions are being discussed. Supervisors also share all pertinent information with their unit staff during unit meetings.
- Regular perimeter checks occur on each shift; exterior perimeter security checks are conducted twice a week and randomly to observe suspicious behavior outside the walls.
- Daily school searches are conducted by the School Team.
- Future plans include a two-tier security check point at both the entrance of the facility and the entrance to the compound.
- Effective 3/6/2023 SEO staff and canines were deployed to BJN Monday-Friday, 7am-3pm to assist with searches. Additional assistance of the SEO and the Canine Units are requested, when needed.
- As of 3/20/2023, 86 staff have completed Narcan Training. Narcan is available in every unit.
- The addition of Vapor Tracer machines at the entrance of the facility will be utilized to detect illegal substances.

- Field searches are conducted before and after a unit is moved throughout the facility (to/from school and outdoor recreation).

Central and Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Halls

- In accordance with California Code of Regulations §1324 and §1324, prior to working in a detention facility, all facility staff, partner agencies, community-based organizations, and volunteers receive mandatory training and a handbook which outlines required safety regulations, and strictly prohibits contraband from entering the facility.
- Probation has contracted security guards. All bags and persons entering a juvenile hall are screened by security using metal detectors and x-ray machines.
- Daily, the facility has unit searches. Weekly, we have AB 109 deployed staff complete in-depth searches.
- Signs related to illegal contraband such as, narcotics, firearms, and electronic devices, with applicable laws are displayed at each facility.
- Probation has requested a security assessment of the facility to be conducted by the LASD to see what enhancements should be implemented to keep the facility secure and safe.

Residential Treatment Services Bureau (Probation Camps)

- Issue memos, instruct supervisors to disseminate policies and procedures to remind staff of their responsibilities related to detection/prevention of contraband.
- Utilize facility corrective action plans, including refresher training on how to conduct searches, proactive supervision techniques, identify signs of substance use, and referral process for testing, and investigating the causation of such behaviors.
- Facility managers meet regularly with partner agencies, contractors, volunteers, and visitors to remind them they are responsible for ensuring the facility remains safe and secure.
- All supplies, food, and equipment brought into the facility must be pre-approved by the Director and inspected by sworn staff upon entry.
- Signs related to illegal contraband such as, narcotics, firearms, and electronic devices, with applicable laws are displayed at each facility.
- Persons entering a camp have their bags inspected and may be screened with a Vapor Tracer when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the person is under the influence or attempting to bring in contraband.
- Managers sit on security enhancement work groups with Internal Services Department (ISD), Department of Public Work (DPW), Chief Executive Office and the Department's Management Services Bureau (MSB) to identify and track progress on security projects such as the installation of Closed Circuit Television Cameras, construction of guard shack, roller bars, obscuring screens, reinforced

gates, locks, and recent placement of security guards to prevent unauthorized access to parking areas and facility perimeters where contraband is easily thrown into the facility. This was done at the three (3) east camps (Afflerbaugh, Paige, and Rockey) in November and December of 2022. Plans include placing security personnel at Dorothy Kirby Center (DKC) and Campus Kilpatrick.

- Each facility selected minimally one (1) representative to participate in a Gang Intelligence Unit. Their function is to investigate and share information related to gang activity and narcotics trends in the facilities and the community.
- In 2021, the cell phone policy was revised and enforced. The Department revised and began enforcing the prohibition of personal cell phones. Additionally, starting with Dorothy Kirby Center, visitors are required to use clear bags during visitations for baby supplies and a newly developed list of approved baby supplies.
- Narcan supplies distributed; completed training for trainers to ensure all staff are trained before they are given a holster and supply of Narcan. In the interim, trained staff can access Narcan in the Automated Electronic Device storage in the living units and supervisors' offices.
- Ordered new evidence lockers, storage supplies, label machines, and established access to the Prelims system to book, and submit narcotics for testing and destruction with LASD.
- Added additional narcotics to the testing kit panels; and youth with court ordered drug testing, as part of their conditions of probation, are being tested regularly.

RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

The following provides details about the resources that are allocated to address this problem, including the accessibility of rehabilitative and trauma-informed programming consistent with the Youth Justice Re-Imagined approach.

The resources that are allocated to address the issue of contraband through rehabilitation includes individualized assessments and a multi-faceted approach. Youth with a history of substance abuse through self-admission, medical testing, or psychological assessments will be referred to a DPH Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (DPH-SAPC) contracted Client Engagement and Navigation Services (CENS) provider while detained in juvenile hall. The CENS provider utilizes the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) criteria to determine the requisite Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment needed for each youth and connects them to a provider before they are released into the community.

Previously, SUD services were only provided through individual therapy and group Cognitive Behavioral Interventions (CBI) facilitated by Department of Mental Health (DMH) clinicians; however, DPH-SAPC CENS providers are now conducting educational groups to youth detained in the halls and will contract for additional SUD services for youth who will be detained in a camp or Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF).

If a youth was not identified as having a need for substance abuse services but is subsequently identified after disclosing in treatment, being under the influence, or an officer receives notification from a parent/caregiver, the case worker can have the youth assessed for treatment and ask the court to have services added as a condition should the youth refuse to participate.

DMH provides both individual and group counseling which youth can request, when needed. Furthermore, through the implementation of the LA Model, services will continue to be enhanced and incorporate trainings on small group trauma responsive practices, which includes small homelike therapeutic environments, youth-centered collaborative approaches, and evidence-based Cognitive Behavior Intervention (CBI) such as Dialectic Behavioral Therapy, Seeking Safety and the Developmental Stage System (DSS), which includes Interactive Journaling as a method to change maladaptive thoughts and behaviors by teaching youth skills that will create a safe environment conducive to healing, personal growth, and development through a restorative approach.

With the implementation of the LA Model and the DSS, the Probation Department remains committed to a care-first model and a holistic approach to juvenile justice; one which focuses on positive behavioral change. In addition, the Behavioral Management Program, a high intensity approach to behavior modification, is utilized in each Probation facility to encourage good behavior throughout the day, which in turn, keeps youth motivated, as well as creating constructive individual attitudes, contributing to a youth's motivation to participate in programming.

SERVICES AND SUPPORT

The types of services and supports being offered to youth around substance abuse issues with respect to the resources allocated, include but are not limited to the following Substance Abuse related programming:

- Mindfulness-Based Substance Abuse Treatment for Adolescents: 12 Session Curriculum
- The Forward-Thinking Interactive Journaling, particularly the substance abuse journal, which is a CBI
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), as evidence-based cognitive behavior therapy
- Seeking Safety
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- DMH provides SUD counseling, individual and group for non-SYTF youth
- Various Probation programming and community partners offer services that address the underlying risk factors and needs related to substance abuse.
- Gateway (provider) – group SUD services to SYTF commitments.

- Tarzana Treatment Center – will provide a counselor for SYTF youth starting March 2023.

Utilization of K-9 Search Teams to Conduct Searches of Housing Units

Effective March 6, 2023, the Department's SEO staff are onsite at Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall conducting random searches of Units and youth Monday through Friday from 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM. These searches include K-9s, as necessary and appropriate.

Supplementing Existing Security, Stationed at the Entrances and Perimeters, with Law Enforcement, Including the Utilization of K-9 Search Teams

The Department currently has security guards assigned at the entrance of both juvenile halls, under a contract held by the Sheriff's Department. The Department is in conversations with the Sheriff's Department regarding deploying Sheriff's Security Officers to the facilities, rather than the existing security guards. However, the number of vacancies in the Security Officer classification may limit this option. If this is not possible, we will explore higher levels of security personnel for the two facilities. Reserve Deputy Probation Officers will be assigned to assist with perimeter monitoring and searches by April 1, 2023. The County's ISD has moved forward with a sole source master agreement for canine services in our juvenile halls. The timeframe to have the master agreement in place is estimated to be in early April 2023.

Reporting to OIG and POC - Complaints of Misuse or Misconduct on K-9 Search Teams Utilization

Thus far, we have not received complaints of misuse or misconduct of K-9 search teams. However, if we do, we will ensure to report them timely to the OIG and POC.

Documentation on the Deployment of K-9 Search Teams

(Need to provide date, time, units, names of staff involved in search, names of staff assigned to the unit, what was discovered, measures taken, and other relevant information)

The following provides a sample of the searches conducted by the Department's SEO and the contracted K-9 Services provider.

	Facility	Entity	Unit Searched	What was discovered
01/06/23	BJH	Interquest	Facility	No alerts
01/07/23	CJH	Interquest	Visitation	No alerts

01/08/23	BJH	SEO	W2, X2, Y2	10 vape pens: 22 cartridges
01/13/23	CJH	Interquest	Facility	No alerts
01/14/23	BJH	Interquest	Visitation	No alerts
01/21/23	CJH	Interquest	Facility	5 alerts
01/22/23	CJH	Interquest	Facility	7 alerts
01/23/23	BJH	Interquest	Facility	No alerts
01/28/23	CJH	Interquest	Visitation	6 alerts
01/29/23	CJH	Interquest	Visitation	1 alert
01/31/23	CJH	Interquest	Facility	(1) Cellphone (1) Cellphone charger (2) vape pens
02/02/23	CJH	Interquest	Facility	No alerts
02/05/23	CJH	Interquest	Visitation	No alerts
02/08/23	BJH	Interquest	Facility	No alerts
02/10/23	BJH	SEO	X1, X2	(14) Alerts (5) Marijuana Vape Pens (1) Cell Phone (1) Laptop (2) unidentified Pills
02/11/23	CJH	Interquest	Facility	5 alerts
02/18/23	CJH	Interquest	Visitation	No alerts
02/26/23	CJH	Interquest	Visitation	No alerts
03/01/23	BJH	SEO	Y1	3 alerts to marijuana or marijuana residue/odor
03/05/23	BJH	SEO	X1	(6) alerts (2) vape pens

II. IMMEDIATE EFFORT WITH PROBATION STAFF WITH SUPERVISORIAL DUTIES TO INITIATE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AGAINST ANY EMPLOYEE WHO HAS KNOWLEDGE OF ANOTHER EMPLOYEE ENABLING THE SPREAD OF ILLICIT SUBSTANCES, HOWEVER, DOES NOT REPORT THOSE ACTIVITIES TO THEIR SUPERVISOR (DIRECTIVE 5)

The Department is reviewing the potential path(s) for entry of illicit substances into juvenile hall. This review is being performed as expeditiously as possible but as thoroughly as necessary to inform opportunities to strengthen the effectiveness of preventative and detective security controls in order to stop future entry of illicit

substances. If evidence is found that appears to support staff complicity, the appropriate level of corrective performance management action will be deployed up to and including discharge and/or criminal referral.

The OIG recommends, and we concur, utilizing local law enforcement to conduct investigations. We have placed one staff on Ordered Absence for this type of alleged behavior and continue to monitor others, including staff, county partners, LACOE staff, community based providers, contractors and visitors.

III. WORK TO IMMEDIATELY BEGIN THE DISCIPLINE PROCESS, INCLUDING TERMINATION FOR ANY EMPLOYEE WHO, IN VIOLATION OF COUNTY POLICY, IS FOUND TO BE ENABLING THE SPREAD OF ILLICIT SUBSTANCES IN ANY JUVENILE PROBATION FACILITY (DIRECTIVE 6)

As of the date of this report to your Board, the investigation of security control weaknesses and accountability is ongoing. Fully informed findings from this investigation that identify individuals who evidence supports were complicit in the entry of illicit substances will result in appropriate performance management actions and/or referrals to the District Attorney as applicable. The Department will continue to collaborate with County Counsel on the path forward as evidence-based clarity is achieved.

Conclusion

The Probation Department will seek continuous process improvement with respect to security of our youth facilities including reinforcing our vigilance against contraband entering these facilities. If future incursions of contraband arise, the Department will use an assessment of those incidents to strengthen any disparity between security expectations and actual performance. Complicity of employees and/or others with the entry of contraband will be accompanied by a due diligence security and causation review in support of appropriate disciplinary actions and/or criminal referrals.

Please contact me if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Felicia Cotton, Interim Chief Deputy, Juvenile Services, at (562) 940-2526.

KLF:FC

c: Honorable Akemi Arakaki, Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court
Fesia Davenport, Chief Executive Officer
Celia Zavala, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Dawyn R. Harrison, County Counsel
Christina R. Ghaly, Director, Department of Health Services
Lisa H. Wong, Director, Department of Mental Health
Barbara Ferrer, Director, Department of Public Health
Max Huntsman, Inspector General

Each Supervisor
March 22, 2023
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Wendelyn Julien, Executive Director, Probation Oversight Commission
Debra Duardo, Superintendent, Los Angeles County Office of Education
Rene Philips, Acting Senior Manager, CEO
Justice Deputies



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

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MAX HUNTSMAN
INSPECTOR GENERAL

April 7, 2023

TO: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Max Huntsman
Inspector General

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Max Huntsman", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

SUBJECT: **REPORT BACK ON ADDRESSING EMERGENT ILLICIT
SUBSTANCES AND CONTRABAND ENTERING THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY JUVENILE HALLS
(ITEM NO. 56A, AGENDA OF MARCH 7, 2023)**

PURPOSE OF MEMORANDUM

On March 7, 2023, the Board of Supervisors (Board) passed a motion directing the Office of Inspector General, with support from the Probation Oversight Commission (POC), to report back in writing within 30 days with details about the Office of Inspector General's in-depth and comprehensive investigation into how illicit substances, and contraband are entering the facilities, including through staff and visitors, with recommendations, if any, to address illicit substances and contraband from entering the juvenile halls.

In response to the Board's directive to conduct an investigation, the Office of Inspector General visited both juvenile hall facilities, conducted youth interviews in the presence of their attorneys, interviewed Probation Department staff, reviewed Probation Department policies and procedures, monitored the security checks of persons entering the facilities through the security entrance, watched video recordings of K-9 searches conducted, and received information from informants to help assess how contraband and illicit drugs are entering the facilities and into the hands of youth.

BARRY J. NIDORF JUVENILE HALL

Overdose Incidents

The Office of Inspector General was able to confirm that three overdose incidents occurred at Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall (BJNJH) this year. Two of the three incidents involved the same youth, on two consecutive days, and one involved another youth housed in the same unit. The information regarding the overdoses is based upon a review of Probation Department documentation.

On February 27, 2023, during a visual safety check, Youth 1 was seen sleeping while sitting up in his room. When the Detention Services Officer (DSO) found Youth 1 unresponsive, the DSO declared a “code blue” and called for backup. Medical personnel determined that Youth 1 had “indigested an unknown drug” and administered Narcan. The medical staff then transported Youth 1 to a nearby hospital, where Youth 1 was examined and discharged to return to BJNJH. A search of the youth’s room was never conducted after the overdose incident. The following day, while in school, Youth 1 appeared under the influence of some illegal substance. Youth 1 was escorted to BJNJH’s medical unit and transported to the hospital again for observation.

That same evening of February 28, 2023, a second Youth housed in the same unit as Youth 1 was found unresponsive in the restroom. According to the documentation, Probation staff believed that Youth 2 ingested an unknown drug. A “code blue” was declared, Narcan was administered, and Youth 2 was transported to a local hospital. The next day, on March 1, 2023, a K-9 unit conducted a search of the unit where Youth 1 and Youth 2 were housed and recovered the following:

1. Eight Fentanyl pills from inside a youth’s room along with two other pills inside the door lock.
2. Three Fentanyl pills recovered in a lotion bottle inside a youth’s room.
3. A crushed pill inside a youth’s windowsill.
4. Two large bindles of what appeared to be Fentanyl inside the dorm.
5. A makeshift straw with white residue in a youth’s room.

During the search, a youth appeared to be under the influence but the youth was not drug tested or transferred to the medical unit for observation. A search was conducted of the youth, but nothing was recovered.

The documents reviewed by the Office of Inspector General indicate that this is the only K-9 search that was conducted in this specific unit since January 1, 2023. Other

searches have been conducted in adjacent units. It was noted that youth in different units interact at times during movement from one area to another at BJNJH, specifically during recreational periods and during school hours. This appears to be a likely method that youth are using to transfer contraband to each other.

Packages thrown over perimeter walls into BJNJH

Through its investigation, the Office of Inspector General learned that packages containing contraband are being thrown over the perimeter walls of BJNJH into the facility. According to the Probation Department's supervising staff at BJNJH, this started shortly after youths were transferred from Central Juvenile Hall (CJH) to BJNJH in March 2022.

There are three perimeter walls at BJNJH where packages are thrown over a wall onto the facility grounds. According to the Probation Department staff, they have found arrows spray painted on the outside of these walls, which they believe gives direction as to the location where the contraband should be thrown over the wall.

To combat this problem, the Probation Department is conducting perimeter checks inside the facility three times a day, once every shift, to recover any contraband found on the grounds that was thrown over the walls. However, there are no logs kept of these perimeter checks and no perimeter checks are being conducted on the outside of the facility. According to the Probation Department staff, youths find ways to distract staff in order to break the back doors of their units to collect the contraband thrown over the walls. The following are photos of the plywood on the broken doors that youths broke to retrieve contraband thrown onto facility grounds.:



The Probation staff also believe drones are used to drop contraband into the facilities, and noted in its Board report back dated March 22, 2023, that it is researching the possibility of acquiring Drone Security Technology to eliminate the risk of drones dropping contraband into CJH. If acquired, Drone Security Technology should also be used at BJNJH.

Entry into the BJNJH

All visitors and staff, other than staff who transport youth to the facility, are to enter BJNJH through the front entrance way where a security check is conducted by an outside security company.¹ Office of Inspector General staff monitored the front door screening process on several weekdays and observed people entering the facility. Family visits are permitted on the weekends but special visits, which are discussed in the next section, can be scheduled during the week. Office of Inspector General staff observed that bags were not searched during the screenings, and that electric security monitors were not consistently monitored. Even when an alert was sounded as staff or other persons walked through the metal detector, no further actions were taken by the security personnel to screen the individuals with a wand or to conduct a search.

¹ Security is currently provided by Allied Universal Security Services. The Probation Department reported that it is seeking to replace Allied Universal Security Services and use security personnel from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

According to Probation Department staff, the security company has strict instructions not to touch **any** individual entering the facility, which would include weekend family visitors if the information provided to the Office of Inspector General is accurate. Based upon this information, that means if an alert is sounded, the security company will wand search an individual and ask them to empty their pockets, but no pat down searches for weapons, drugs, or other contraband are conducted. This information has not been confirmed with the security company as efforts to contact them were unsuccessful.

A second entry to BJNJH located at the front of the building is used for transportation buses. The same security company monitors this entry. However, there are no searches of the transportation buses during the departure or arrival at BJNJH conducted.

Visits/Special Visits

Youths are allowed to receive visits by parents, guardians, or persons standing in *loco parentis*² and grandparents and visits from their children.³ In addition, youths are also allowed special visits with other family members, such as adult siblings and supportive adults, with the approval of a facility administrator or as ordered by the court.⁴ Probation Department staff have concerns that these special visits have led to contraband entering the facilities because the identity of these individuals are not being properly verified. The Superintendent at BJNJH reports that he is not sure who is approving these special visitors. The Probation Department has recently ceased allowing special visits.

Unauthorized Food Deliveries

Outside food brought into the facilities for the youth is restricted to coming from “approved sources” and be non-perishable, ready to eat, and store bought (pre-packaged) foods.⁵ The policy refers to Probation staff, church groups, educators, and mental health staff, in an apparent reference to the types of groups that might be granted approval. In addition, staff are not permitted to “prepare food at home or off-site to bring it into the facilities to be consumed by minors.”⁶ By this policy, staff is prohibited from bringing restaurant prepared foods and any food from a non-approved source, delivered by an unknown person, to youth.

² *Loco Parentis* refers to the legal responsibility in which a person puts themselves in the position of assuming and discharging the obligations of a parent.

³ Los Angeles County Probation Department, Movement, Detention Services Bureau -300, section 304, Visiting.

⁴ Los Angeles County Probation Department, Movement, Detention Services Bureau-300, section 304, Visiting.

⁵ Los Angeles County Probation Department, Food Services Policies and Procedures, Hall and Camps #012.

⁶ Los Angeles County Probation Department, Food Services Policies and Procedures, Hall and Camps #012.

Persons interviewed by Office of Inspector General staff reported that for some time, youth orchestrated fake Door Dash food deliveries to bring contraband into the facility. According to the information provided to the Office of Inspector General, youths arranged for family or friends to come to the facility disguised as Door Dash delivery drivers. The Probation Department staff, in contravention of Probation Department policies, would then accept the order at the entrance of the facility, claim it as their own, and then drop it off to the youth as a favor. According to interviewees, these prohibited foods delivered to the youth were hiding contraband, including pills wrapped inside burritos. According to Probation Department management, staff have been directed that food deliveries from services like Door Dash and Uber Eats are no longer permitted.

Contraband Storage at BJNJH

Based on the Office of Inspector General's review, all contraband recovered at BJNJH is collected and stored in a locked closet inside the Superintendent's office.⁷ All of the items are placed in paper or plastic bags inside the closet, without an official written inventory of the items. Local law enforcement is not notified, and there is no process to place the evidence in a locker or to log the evidence even though Probation staff have access to the evidence logging database system used by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. In addition, inside the closet is a safe that is reported to be used to store cash and valuables. However, when the Office of Inspector General staff requested to see the contents of the safe, the Superintendent informed them that he did not have the combination to open it.

All contraband should be securely stored after being logged for evidentiary and accountability purposes and because improperly storing drugs such as Fentanyl, may pose a health hazard. Non-secure storage also increases the risk of the drugs being stolen. Including the possibility that the drugs will end up in the hands of youth in the facility. The following are photos of the contraband closet and the contraband kept inside:

⁷ According to the Superintendent, only he and his secretary have keys to the closet used to hold contraband.



CENTRAL JUVENILE HALL

Entry into CJH

All visitors and staff, other than staff who transport youth to the facility, enter CJH through the front entrance way where a security check is conducted by the same outside security company used at BJNJH. Office of Inspector General staff monitored the front door screening process during several weekday visits and observed that although bags were processed through the electronic scanner, Probation Department staff and their bags were not searched even after the metal detectors signaled an alarm. Probation Department staff also were repeatedly observed placing containers such as water cups and thermoses on top of the scanning machine as the staff walked through the metal detectors. The staff retrieve the drinking containers after walking through the metal detectors without the containers being examined or searched by security staff.

As with BJNJH, according to Probation Department staff, the security company has strict instructions not to touch **any** individual entering the facility, which would include weekend family visitors if the information provided to the Office of Inspector General is accurate. Based upon this information, that means if an alert is sounded, the security company will wand search an individual and ask them to empty their pockets, but no pat down searches for weapons, drugs, or other contraband are conducted. This information has not been confirmed with the security company as efforts to contact them were unsuccessful.

In addition to the main entrance being monitored by the private security company, there are four other entryways to CJH:

1. A side door entrance next to the staff parking entrance. Probation Directors assigned to the facility have a key to this door which allows them to bypass the main entrance. This entrance is not monitored by security.
2. A bus transportation entrance for buses carrying youths that is also used by outside vendors working at the facility. Although youth are searched before they are transported from the facility and when they arrive at their destination, the staff and outside vendors are not searched.
3. A bus transportation entrance for buses not carrying youths. This entrance is monitored by the security company, but staff is not searched entering from this entrance.
4. An entrance for the Probation Department's Internal Services Department (ISD). This entrance is monitored by the security company from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., then by the Probation Department from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. However, no searches of staff are conducted.

Packages thrown into CJH

Based on the Office of Inspector General's review, there are four perimeter walls at CJH where it was reported to the Office of Inspector General that packages are being thrown over the walls onto facility grounds. All four locations are easily accessible to the public from the outside.

Contraband Storage at CJH

The Office of Inspector General discovered that contraband recovered by Probation Department staff is not properly documented or stored. While a Probation Department staffer at CJH claimed that contraband is discarded, the staffer later explained that by discarded they actually meant that the contraband items are kept in a tote bag inside an office, on a coat rack, with jackets hiding it. Probation Department supervising staff stated that unauthorized pills confiscated are "sometimes given to [their] K-9 unit for training." No documentation was provided as to when and how pills recovered at the facility are transferred to their K-9 unit. The following are photos of the tote bag in the office where contraband is stored:



As with the contraband at BJNJH that is confiscated, contraband recovered at CJH is not properly documented or reported to local law enforcement and the same security and safety concerns regarding the storage of contraband exist at CJH.

VIOLATIONS OF PROBATION DEPARTMENT POLICIES

While the Probation Department has policies covering visitors⁸, what food items can be brought into the facilities and by whom⁹, and procedures on how to properly handle contraband recovered at facilities, these policies are not being followed or strictly enforced.¹⁰

Visitors are not permitted to bring any items other than [2 keys on a single ring and identification](#) with them into a facility. Once visitors are verified through their identification, [they are subject to search](#). Yet, as noted in this report, visitors are not thoroughly searched to ensure that no prohibited items are brought into the juvenile halls because, as reported to the Office of Inspector General, the security company is prohibited from touching **any** individual entering the facility. Probation Department policy also **requires** that all visitors are scanned using Vapor Tracer units before any visitation and, if a metal detector buzzes, are subject to a wand search. From the observations of Office of Inspector General staff and reports from Probation Department staff, the

⁸ Los Angeles County Probation Department, Movement, Detention Services Bureau 300, section 304, Visiting. The policy regarding visitations is available on the Probation Department's public website on the [Juvenile Hall page](#).

⁹ Los Angeles County Probation Department, Food Services Policies and Procedures, Hall and Camps #012.

¹⁰ Los Angeles County Probation Department, Daily Unit Operations, Detention Services Bureau 500, section 515, Handling Contraband.

security personnel responsible for searching those entering the facilities are not wandering persons who have set off the metal detector. While the particular policy referenced here applies to visitors, staff and others entering the facility who set off the metal detector should be checked with the wand. Routinely failing to screen staff and other persons who have set off the metal detector risks certain types of contraband, such as weapons, being brought into the facility. The failure to properly screen employees and other persons entering on weekdays, raises the possibility of lax security on the weekends when family visits occur. As noted previously, there are reports that the identity of special visitors is not being properly verified. In addition, at BJNJH it is unclear who at the facility is approving these special visits.

As detailed in the section titled, *Unauthorized Food Deliveries*, the staff's agreement to deliver outside food to youth is in violation of Probation Department policy.¹¹ These policies need to be updated and strictly enforced.

Probation Department contraband policy includes that all confiscated contraband be kept as evidence, destroyed, or removed from circulation within the facility. Contraband is required to be placed in a sealed envelope with a Contraband Inventory Summary form completed. In the event the contraband merits criminal charges, police are to be notified and a written receipt for the evidence must be obtained from the agency. Any evidence not provided to law enforcement should be safely secured until disposal.¹² As detailed in the sections on contraband storage, there is a lack of compliance with these policies.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the information reported to Office of Inspector General staff during its investigation, contraband is likely entering the facility through the following means: (1) family and special visitors entering the facility who are not being properly identified and searched; (2) staff entering the facility who are not searched, (3) being thrown over perimeter walls, (4) delivery via drone, (5) County employees and contracted vendors who may enter the facility through non-secured entrances without being searched, and (6) unauthorized food deliveries by individuals disguised as food delivery drivers with the assistance of Probation Department staff completing the delivery to the youth.

¹¹Los Angeles County Probation Department, Food Services Policies and Procedures, Hall and Camps #012.

¹²Los Angeles County Probation Department, Daily Unit Operations, Detention Services Bureau 500, section 515, Handling Contraband.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Interdiction alone is rarely an effective means of preventing drug use. Many of the youth in our care struggle with mental health and substance abuse challenges. Conditions within our juvenile custody facilities encourage drug use through the absence of sufficient programming. A large percentage of youth in the camps are supplied sleep aids because of the conditions they face. Accordingly, the Office of Inspector General does not recommend a focus on enforcement over improving the conditions which drive drug use. However, the following approaches are available to supplement improving conditions in the halls:

1. All Probation Department policies on visitation, contraband, and food should be followed, with investigations and discipline for violations.
2. All visitors and their belongings entering juvenile hall facilities should be physically searched and scanned for illegal substances using Vapor Tracer units. Visitors should be required to remove all outer clothing prior to being scanned to ensure that any contraband can be visualized. Visitors who, for religious reasons, cannot remove all outer clothing (such as scarves, burkas, or yarmulke, etc.) should be taken to a private room to be searched by a staff member of the same gender with a metal detecting wand.
3. Establish randomized staff and volunteer searches through the use of scent detection canines and/or mobile trace spectrometers to deter and detect staff and volunteer contraband smuggling. Use of physical searches and enhanced searches of staffs' personal belongings, including bags and food containers.
4. Employ electronic detection devices such as mobile trace spectrometers and body scanners to assist in detecting contraband that may be secreted in the cavity of staff and visitors to the facilities.
5. All staff and visitors should be required to utilize clear plastic bags to carry personal belongings into the facilities.
6. Special visitors should only be approved by a judge and the person's identity should be verified.

7. Create policies to assist in identifying the source of contraband entering the facilities, including conducting thorough investigations that include interviews and review of video recordings of entries into the facilities, housing units and visitation areas.
8. Probation Department staff should supervise and monitor all non-privileged telephone calls in the housing unit by youths in order to listen for plans for the delivery of contraband.
9. Restrict youth from wearing excessively sized clothing that allows easier concealment of contraband.
10. Youths' personal items should be stored in areas easily monitored and inspected by Probation Department staff such as in cubby holes or open shelves.
11. The Probation Department should follow its contraband policy and consider revisions to the policy in order to adequately safeguard seized contraband.
12. All illegal contraband recovered should be documented, reported to local law enforcement or the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, retrieved by law enforcement personnel, and booked into evidence. Illegal contraband should only be safely stored inside a juvenile hall facility pending the collection by a law enforcement agency.
13. The Probation Department should utilize closed-circuit television on the outside perimeter of the facilities to deter trespassers and contraband being thrown over the walls and consistently conduct perimeter checks to retrieve contraband. These checks should be documented to ensure regularity. If acquired, Drone Security Technology should also be used at both juvenile halls.
14. The ban on outside food, including prohibiting food deliveries, should be enforced.
15. Youth appearing to be under the influence should be closely monitored, examined by medical personnel, and later subjected to random drug tests.

16. Creation of a specialized contraband unit to investigate smuggling of contraband, including conducting interviews, review of video recordings and telephone calls made within the facilities.
17. Implement security checks and searches of units and youths conducted on the weekend following visitation.
18. Bi-annual training to Probation Department staff regarding contraband detection, the proper handling of contraband, and tactics to avoid manipulation by youths that may end up assisting the contraband being brought into the facilities.
19. Education and training of outside organizations of contraband policies.
20. Track data related to drug introduction/interdiction and overdoses to better develop evidence-based empirics supported practices relying on data, including date, time, location, search reports, Narcan deployments, mail interceptions, and means of smuggling and interdiction.
21. Drug rehabilitation treatment programs for detained youth.

If you have any questions concerning this report, please contact me at 213-974-6100.

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